



Minutes of the Twenty Ninth Annual Town Meeting held in the Parish Room, St Mary's Church, Cowes on Thursday 18th April 2013 at 7 p.m., convened under the provision of the section 99 and schedule 12 of the Local Government Act, 1972.

Present : Councillor Walters (Town Mayor) (Chairman)
Councillors Brown, Cowan, Ellis, Fuller, Hammond, Jones, Matthews, Robinson, and Wells, Sargent Sizer and fifteen members of the public.

178 JUST A MINUTE PRESENTATIONS

The Town Council invited local organisations who had received a grant this year to make a short presentation about why they applied and how they used the funds awarded.

Personal Presentations were received from:

Supporters of Cowes Library

Cowes Open Bowls Tournament

Cowes Medina Bowls Club

IW Music Festival

Northwood House Charitable Trust

AAM Cowes Week Fireworks

Cowes Carnival Committee

A written report was received from both A. S. T. O. and Gurnard Pre-school who were unable to attend the meeting.

179 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Banks, Mazillius and Peacey-Wilcox

180 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the twenty eighth Annual Town Meeting held on 19th April 2012, be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

181 COMMUNITY AWARD

This was awarded to Bill Rogers who received an engraved Town Shield and a certificate from the Council. This was in recognition of all his hard work in a voluntary capacity in assisting Councillor Jones with the planting of summer bedding throughout the Town.

182 REPORT OF THE BUSINESS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

Councillor Walters read a short report :-

It has been a very eventful and busy year for Cowes Town Council with the sad loss of Councillor Paul Birch and the resignations of Councillors John Wilcox and Councillor Rebecca McGregor for work related reasons. This May 2013 we will have a full complement of 16 Councillors with some familiar

names making the decision to cap their pens and retire and an intake of new and former councillors. Councillors Wells, Mazillius and Sanderson collectively have a considerable number of years of experience and insight into local government organisation and affairs that will be missed. I am sure you will all want me to put it on record how much the Town appreciates the many hours of work they have given to Cowes Town Council in trying to make Cowes a better place for residents young and old.

Cowes Town Council, as with any local government office can only function with the dedicated service of its officers. We are extremely fortunate to have Roger Hendey and Sue Waters manning the office and giving advice and support when required.

My thanks go to Councillor Geoff Banks who in his capacity as Deputy Town Mayor has given me invaluable support and advice over the past year and taken on duties in my absence. My thanks also to Councillors Mathews and Jones who have chaired our finance and planning committees, having a quorum was sometimes an issue and hopefully that will change with our full complement of councillors.

As Mayor with my wife, I had the privilege meeting Her Majesty the Queen last year on the occasion of her Diamond Jubilee. We were mindful of the fact that Cowes Town Council under the leadership of Councillor McGregor Cowes Town Council had put in place certain commemorative events that marked that special day: -the unveiling of the plaque on the parade, the commemorative mugs, the planting of the Oak tree and that very memorable Jubilee Concert at the Yacht Haven.

Special recognition should go to Councillor Banks for funding the instillation of the plaque and also to Councillor Mazillius whose efforts and contacts gave us the superb concert.

The Friends of the ORP Blyskawisca with help of Cowes Town Council commemorated the 70th anniversary of the defence of Cowes by the Polish warship. The Polish navy sent the Polish Naval Band and a very impressive warship to Cowes. We also had some very moving wreath laying ceremonies in remembrance of those who perished on that night in April 1942. In November I accepted an invitation to visit the ORP Blyskawica in Gdynia to commemorate the 75 years of service with the Polish Navy.

During the year we have made financial donations to Cowes Business Association to help promote the Town and we are paying for the supply and erection of flags to make the high street more welcoming. We have made some additions to the Northwood Recreation Ground, refurbished the toilets and agreed to maintain them. We also continue to support Northwood House Charitable Trust with litter bins and items for the play area. Cowes Town Council has also made financial donations to various other local organisations including the Earl Mountbatten Hospice and the Cowes Week fireworks.

On a broader front Cowes Town Council recognises the concerns that residents have on the following issues and our need to monitor them closely: -Cowes Enterprise College, The P.F.I. contract and its implications, Waste disposal (to try and find a solution that suits the holiday nature of the Town), The Medina Yard development, The proposed Asphalt Plant, The proposed Outer Breakwater and how the financial constraints imposed on County Hall will impact on the Town.

Finally I would like to thank all my council colleagues for their support, it has been a privilege to represent The Town and its Council in what was a very special year.

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ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2013

Copies of the accounts for the year ended 31st March 2013 were circulated at the Meeting. Cllr Matthews (Chair of Finance Committee) was available for any questions but none were asked.

RESOLVED

That the accounts be received and noted.

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ANNUAL SUMMARY – SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM

Sargent Mike Sizer provided a report on Policing activities and priorities in the Town. Cowes SNT is headed up by Inspector Andy Treagus, who also has responsibility for 2 of the response policing teams based at Newport. The rest of the team is made up of Sergeant Mike Sizer (who also has responsibility for the East Cowes SNT), Police Constables Justin Pringle, Sarah Waldegrave, and Michelle Jackson and Police Community Support Officers (PCSO) Lisa Paul and Steve Anker. We are supported by our Special Constables, Jim Arkless, Julian Morgan, Mark Richardson and Rob Sheppard.

Once again it has been an excellent year with crime rates on the Island falling right across the board. The end of year figures for Cowes are yet to be published but quoting for the IOW as a whole:

ASB down 37.10%

Violence against the person with injury down 28.26%

Serious acquisitive crime down 33.33% (includes a 100% fall in robbery but Theft from Motor Vehicles is up 50.00%). TFMV crime is mostly where owners have left their vehicles unlocked.

Total crime is down 6.06%

Local knowledge and a dedicated team have helped solve many crimes in Cowes including the problem with Motor Vehicles at Park Court.

Drug dealers have been a priority and following searches of people, property and vehicles in Cowes, money, stolen goods and drugs were all recovered.

Cowes Police Station is currently still open until the move to the new Cowes Enterprise College.

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ANNUAL SUMMARY – I.W. COUNCIL

A written report was received from Councillor Mazillius – Ward member for Cowes South and Northwood:-

This has been a particularly difficult year for balancing the I.W. Council's books as the Coalition Government continue to address the issue of national deficit reduction by in turn reducing the amount of central grant paid to local authorities. This has been successfully addressed by reducing the centralised costs of service delivery whilst protecting services for the vulnerable and increasing the budgets for adult social care and at the same time freezing any increase in Council Tax charges for the third consecutive year

A written report was also received from Councillor Fuller – Ward member for Cowes West and Gurnard

Holding no cabinet position within the IW Council offered me the opportunity to focus on aspiring to be a good ward councillor. In the past 12 months, I have attended more meetings than any other Councillor and have had the opportunity to be more involved in Health and Wellbeing issues. Planning continues to bring pressure on the communities of Cowes West and Gurnard, with work commencing on safeguard and enhance the Green Gap between

both communities. Elsewhere, I continue to support efforts of those involved with Cowes Enterprise College.

Councillor Peacey-Wilcox did not submit a report advising that Councillor Mazillius had covered everything.

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QUESTIONS FROM THE MEETING

A opportunity to raise issues and concerns was given by the Mayor who advised that the Town Council office headed by Roger Hendey and assisted by Sue Waters was open daily.

(Meeting ended at 8.05 pm)

CHAIRMAN